

In pre-Islamic Arabia, there existed the tribes which witnessed ruling/judgement giving/business-owning/property-inheriting/independent-dominating females. The great-grandmother of the Prophet, Salma bint Amr was a businesswoman and did marry to his great-grandfather, Hashim ibn Abd Manaf, on her own terms, that, if she won't like him after marriage, she would just leave him[1]. Prophet's first wife, Khadijah, too was a businesswoman, as well as, was his employer[1.1]. The Ansari women of Medina had dominance over (or were at least on a par with) the Ansari men[1.2]. The North Arabian Nabataean women were managing their own financial and legal matters without a requisite of having a tutor or a guardian. The financial and legal matters included owning property, managing trade, dealing with transactions, inheriting and bequeathing inheritance to their descendants[1.3]. A list of pre-Islamic Arabian female judges is given in Al-Maidani's Book of Proverbs[1.4].

Al-Tabari (d.923CE, Muslim historian, Quran exegetist) mentions a pre-Islamic female named Al-Zabba {a.k.a Nailah, daughter of Amr b. Zarib (the ruler of the Arabs in the Jazirah and the fringes of Syria, who was slain by his rival, Jadhimah)} who became the ruler and avenged her father's death[1.5]. Mavia, the queen of a 4th century confederation of seminomadic Arabs in southern Syria revolted against the Roman emperor Valens and made him sign a treaty on her own terms[1.6]. Aribi, the nomad folk who occupied the Syrian desert, and extended into the Arabian Peninsula, appeared to have been united throughout the Assyrian period until the time of the king of Assyria, Ashur Bani Apli (668-629BCE) under the rule of a single monarch, generally a queen[1.7]. Names of some of those queens are: Zabibi (a.k.a Zabibe/Zabibieh), Samsi (a.k.a Samshi), Tabua, Adija, Yatie (a.k.a Latie/Jatie), Telhunu, Yapa (a.k.a Lapa/Japa) and Bazlu (a.k.a Bailu/Baslu)[1.8].

Hatoon al-Fassi (a historian of Meccan origin, specialist in women's history at History department, King Saud University, Riyadh, 2009), observes:

There was a tradition of prediction and oracles-givers in Wadi al-Qura, in north-western Arabia (where the two towns lie), and this was a speciality exclusive to priestesses[1.9]. Tradition connects the later settlers in pre-Islamic times with women of influence. For instance, al-Zarqa, daughter of Zuhayr was a kahina (shaman/sage) of Quda'a who prophesied where her tribe should settle after losing some battles against the tribe of Nizar, predicting that they would live in Hajar and prosper there. Her people followed her advice, left Tihama on the west coast of Arabia, and moved eastwards to Hajar, in the direction of Bahrain, where they overcame the Nabataeans, who were there, according to the story, and took control. Then, according to Ibn Khaldun (d.1405CE), she received another prophecy in rhyme, that they would live in Hajar until a crow cried in a certain way, which would be a sign for them to move to Hira in southern Iraq (Ibn Khaldun 2: 288; al-Asfahani 13: 87). Her tribe trusted in her and believed in her

wisdom. It was probably wise advice, since the direction of their migration was in line with the fertile and productive land, in both eastern Arabia and Iraq.

Women appear less infrequently in history, but seem stronger in the background, an image that continued in myth as well as in documented history. For example, according to al-Qalqashandi (d.1418 CE), the Hajar region and town is said in early Islamic sources to have been named after a woman called Hajar, daughter of al-Mukannaf who is reputed to have built it (al-Qalqashandi 5: 52). We have no information about this woman or her identity apart from her name. It seems that this is a remnant of an older tradition of female affiliation to cities as protector goddesses, priestesses or queens[1.10]. (Observation of Hatoon al-Fassi ends.)

[1]

Following is the excerpt from Kitab Al-Tabaqat Al-kabir, by Muḥammad Ibn Sa'd, Tr. Syed Moinul Haq, Pakistan Historical Society, Karachi/Pakistan, 1967, v1, p81, about Prophet's great-grandfather, Hashim and great-grandmother, Salma bint Amr.

//Hāshim started with a caravan of the Quraysh with merchandise, he passed by Madinah and halted at Suq al-Nabt [P. 46] where a market was held every year, and a number of (page 81 - <https://books.google.ca/books?id=dfnXAAAAMAAJ&focus=searchwithinvolume&q=merchandise+duty-free>) people assembled. They (Quraysh) sold and purchased commodities. Here they noticed a woman on an elevated place COMMANDING another woman to SELL AND PURCHASE on her behalf. This woman appeared to be prudent, persevering and pretty, so Hāshim inquired about her, if she was a spinster or a married woman. He was (page 81 - <https://books.google.ca/books?id=dfnXAAAAMAAJ&focus=searchwithinvolume&q=people+assembled+another+woman+elevated+place>) told that she had been married to Uhayhah Ibn al-Julah, and Amr and Ma'bad were born to her as a result of this wedlock; then she got separation. Since then she has not married because of her HIGH position among her people; and (she would now marry on the condition) that she would be at LIBERTY to leave her husband (page 81 - <https://books.google.ca/books?id=dfnXAAAAMAAJ&focus=searchwithinvolume&q=marry+condition>) if she disliked him. Her name was Salmā Bint `Amr Ibn Zayd (page 81 - [//">https://books.google.ca/books?id=dfnXAAAAMAAJ&focus=searchwithinvolume&q=Disliked+proposal](https://books.google.ca/books?id=dfnXAAAAMAAJ&focus=searchwithinvolume&q=Disliked+proposal))/

Also see,

The Prophetic Biography: Sirah of Ibnu Hisham, Tr. Muhammad Mahdi Al-Sharif, Dar Al-Kotob Al-Ilmiyah pub., Beirut, Lebanon, 2013, edn.1, P73 <https://archive.org/details/SirahIbnHishan/page/n73/mode/1up>

[1.1]

The Prophetic Biography: Sirah of Ibnu Hisham, Tr. Muhammad Mahdi Al-Sharif, Dar Al-Kotob Al-Ilmiyah pub., Beirut, Lebanon, 2013, edn.1, P93
<https://archive.org/details/SirahIbnHishan/page/n93/mode/1up>

The Life of the Prophet Muhammad by Ibn Kathir (Tr. Trevor Le Gassick, Garnet Publishing Limited, U.K, 1st edn, 1998), v1, p189 <https://archive.org/stream/TheLifeOfTheProphetMuhammad-EnglishTranslationOfIbnKathirsAlSira/TheLifeOfTheProphetMuhammad-EnglishTranslationOfIbnKathirsAlSiraAlNabawiyyaVolume1#page/n213/mode/2up>

[1.2]

Sahih Al-Bukhari, Tr. Muhammad Muhsin Khan, Darussalam pub. Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, 1997, v3, p374, The Book of Al-Mazalim, Chapter 25, Hadith 2468
<https://archive.org/details/sahih.bukharienglish/page/n1322/mode/1up>

Sahih Muslim, Tr. Nasiruddin al-Khattab, Darussalam pub., Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, 2007, edn.1, v4, p155-157, The Book Of Divorce, Chapter 5, Hadith [3695] 34 - (1479)
<https://archive.org/details/Sahih.muslimenglish/page/n1834/mode/1up>

Jami At-Tirmidhi, Tr. Abu Khalliy, Darussalam pub., Riyadh, KSA, edn.1, 2007, v6, p48-49, Chapters on the Tafsir, Chapter 66, Hadith 3318 <https://archive.org/details/Jami.tirmidhienglish/page/48/mode/1up>

Musnad Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal, Tr. Nasiruddin al-Khattab, Darussalam pub., Riyadh/K.S.A, 2012, v1, p141-142, Musnad Umar bin al-khattab, Hadith 222 https://archive.org/details/AllInOne-Hadiths-EngArabicDarusalam_201407/All%20in%20One-

Musnad%20E%20Ahmad%20Bin%20Hanbal%2C%20Arabic%20-Eng-But%20non-searchable/page/n142/mode/1up?view=theater

[1.3]

Non-Islamic source

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Nabataea and her Women by Dr. Hatoon Ajwad al-Fassi, The Journal of the Saudi Arabian Natural History Society – vol. 4, no. 2, 2001, p20
<http://faculty.ksu.edu.sa/hatoon.alfassi/My%20EPublications/Nabataea%20and%20her%20Women-2001.pdf>

*Alt link -

<https://archive.org/details/nabataea-and-her-women-2001/page/n12/mode/1up>

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[1.4]

Arabum Proverbia (Latin translation of Al-Maidani's Book of Proverbs by Georg Wilhelm Freytag, Venditur apud A. Marcum pub., Bonnens, 1838), v1, p56
<https://archive.org/details/arabumproverbiav01freyuoft/page/n73/mode/1up>

*Aforementioned book is cited as (Freytag, Arab. prov., i, 56, n) in a non-Islamic source, Muslim Law: An Historical Introduction to the Law of Inheritance by Alexander David Russell & Abdullah Al-Mamun Suhrawardy, Routledge pub., UK, 2008, p17, telling that a list of pre-islamic Arabian female judges is given in al-Maidani's Book of Proverbs. https://books.google.co.in/books?id=NqPfjNFhG-UC&pg=PA17&lpg=PA17&dq='list+of+female+judges'%2B'freytag'&source=bl&ots=6w5edMOoO1&sig=ACfU3U1_SRg4LIOWViexQ80T6JOn6SM6-g&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwi_i8K8zqfrAhVxzzgGHbfoBA8Q6AEwAHoECAkQAQ#v=onepage&q='list%20of%20female%20judges'%2B'freytag'&f=false

[1.5]

The History of al-Tabari, Tr. Moshe Perlmann, State University of New York Press, Albany/USA, 1987, v4, p138-150 <https://archive.org/details/tabarivolume04/page/n152/mode/1up>

[1.6]

Non-Islamic source

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Late Antiquity: A Guide to the Postclassical World, The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, USA, 1999, p569 <https://archive.org/details/lateantiquitygui00bowe/page/569/mode/1up>

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[https://books.google.co.in/books?id=c788wWR_bLwC&pg=PA569&lpg=PA569&dq="she+was+evidently+arab"&source=bl&ots=ohVysZEagR&sig=ACfU3U3ICdhWSDhMhyk7vfe-FNmHr_T4eQ&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwjP-_76zaXrAhXqyTgGHQtdD9wQ6AEwC3oECAoQAAQ#v=onepage&q="she%20was%20evidently%20arab"&f=false](https://books.google.co.in/books?id=c788wWR_bLwC&pg=PA569&lpg=PA569&dq=)

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[1.7]

Non-Islamic source

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The First Campaign Of Sennacherib, King of Assyria, B.C. 705-681, the Assyrian text, edit., trans. by Sidney Smith (Luzac & Co. Pub., London, 1921), p10
<https://archive.org/stream/firstcampaignofs00smituoft#page/10/mode/2up>

An Akkadian Handbook, by Douglas B. Miller & R. Mark Shipp, Eisenbrauns, Indiana, 1996, p46
<https://archive.org/details/akkadianhandbook0000mill/page/46/mode/1up>

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[1.8]

Non-Islamic sources:

*In the following sources, two titles, Tiglath Pileser III and Tiglath Pileser IV would occur; they are referring to one and the same person (see, The American Journal of Theology, Vol. 18, No. 3, Jul., 1914, p470 https://www.jstor.org/stable/3154549?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents).

The first Campaign of Sennacherib, King of Assyria, B.C. 705-681, the Assyrian text, edit., trans. by Sidney Smith (Luzac & Co. Pub., London, 1921), p10 {Zabibi (Zabibe/ Zabibieh), Samsi (Samshi), Yatie (Latie/ Jatie), Tabua, Telhunu, Yapa (Lapa/ Japa), Bazlu (Bailu/ Baslu)}
<https://archive.org/stream/firstcampaignofs00smituoft#page/10/mode/2up>

Arabia Deserta: A Topographical Itinerary by Alois Musil (American Geographical Society/ Oriental Explorations and Studies, No. 2, New York, 1927), p477 {Zabibi (Zabibe/ Zabibieh), Samsi (Samshi)}, p480{Samsi (Samshi), Yatie (Latie/ Jatie), Telhunu}, p483 {Yapa (Lapa/ Japa), Bazlu (Bailu/ Baslu)}, p486{Adija} <https://archive.org/details/in.ernet.dli.2015.499023/page/n499/mode/1up>

Ancient Records of Assyria and Babylonia Volume 1: Historical Records of Assyria From the Earliest Times to Sargon, by Daniel David Luckenbill (University of Chicago Press, Illinois, U.S.A, 1926), p276 {Zabibi (Zabibe/ Zabibieh)}, p279, 293{Samsi (Samshi)}
<https://archive.org/details/in.ernet.dli.2015.532619/page/n294/mode/2up>

*Alt link - <http://oi.uchicago.edu/research/publications/misc/ancient-records-assyria-and-babylonia-volume-1-historical-records-assyria>

Ancient Records of Assyria and Babylonia Volume 2: Historical Records of Assyria From Sargon to the End by Daniel David Luckenbill (University of Chicago Press, Illinois, U.S.A, 1927), p7, 27{Samsi (Samshi)},

p130 {Yatie (Latie/ Jatie)}, p158 {Telhunu}, p209 {Yapa (Lapa/ Japa), Bazlu (Bailu/ Baslu)}
<https://archive.org/details/in.ernet.dli.2015.532630/page/n21/mode/1up>

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Tiglath Pileser III By Abraham S. Anspacher (The Columbia University Press, USA, 1912), p45 {Zabibi (Zabibe/ Zabibieh)}, p52{Samsi (Samshi)}(<https://archive.org/stream/tiglathpileserii00ansprich#page/44/mode/2up>)

The Babylonian Expedition of the University of Pennsylvania by Hermann Ranke, Pub: Pennsylvania Univ., Philadelphia, 1905, series D, vol. 3,
p61{Adija}(<https://archive.org/stream/cu31924085210981#page/n79/mode/2up>)

[1.9]

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‘Kamkam the Nabataean Priestess: Priesthood and Society in Ancient Arabia’ by Hatoon Alfassi in Ugarit to Nabataea: Studies in Honor of John F. Healey, eds. George Anton Kiraz & Zeyad al-Salameen, Gorgias Press, USA, 2012, p3

https://www.academia.edu/22452106/_Kamkam_the_Nabataean_Priestess_Priesthood_and_Society_in_Ancient_Arabia_Ugarit_to_Nabataea_Studies_in_Honor_of_John_F_Healey_eds_George_Anton_Kiraz_and_Zeyad_al_Salameen_Gorgias_Press

*About Hatoon al-Fassi:

- <https://www.webcitation.org/5z36uvHVj?url=http://faculty.ksu.edu.sa/hatoon.alfassi/Pages/CV.aspx>

- <https://www.webcitation.org/5z35v2Ni4?url=http://faculty.ksu.edu.sa/hatoon.alfassi/default.aspx>

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[1.10]

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‘Women in Eastern Arabia: Myth and Representation’ by Hatoon Alfassi in Gulf Women, ed. Amira El-Azhary Sonbol, Bloomsbury Qatar Foundation pub., Doha, Qatar, 2012, p40-41
https://www.academia.edu/22452085/Women_in_Eastern_Arabia_Myth_and_Representation_in_GULF_WOMEN

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